



THE GLASGOW HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

GHA BOARD

BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

MINUTE OF MEETING – FRIDAY 12 February 2021

Present: Professor Paddy Gray (Vice-Chair), Jo Armstrong, Jo Boaden, Andrew Clark, and Cathy McGrath.

In attendance: Anthony Allison (Director of Governance), Martin Armstrong (Group Chief Executive), Olga Clayton (Group Director of Housing and Care), Steven Henderson (Group Director of Finance), Jehan Weerasinghe (GHA Managing Director), Tom Barclay (Group Director of Property and Development – Item 9 only), David Fletcher (Director of Development – Item 9 only) and Euan Smith (Senior HR Advisor – item 19 only).

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bernadette Hewitt. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair assumed the Chair of the meeting. It was noted that due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, we are operating with a dual-approach to Board meetings with the non-attending members having participated in a discussion of the papers earlier in the day.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the standing declarations of interest.

3. Minute of Friday 6 November 2020 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of 6 November 2020.

4. Service mobilisation update

The Board were provided with an update on the most up to date position with our service mobilisation following the change in restrictions from the prior meeting.

The Board discussed our escalation process for arrears cases, the actions we can take short of eviction in 'won't pay' cases and our overall messaging to customers. It was confirmed we are taking all action available in 'won't pay' cases.

The Board discussed the implications of the current restrictions for our close cleaning. It was confirmed that the current restrictions are such that we are unable to deliver the service. It was reiterated that remobilising the service is a priority as soon as restrictions sufficiently ease to allow it.

The Board considered the current position in relation to environmental services and bulk uplifts. It was confirmed we are continuing to undertake bulk uplifts, including increasing the levels in some areas.

An update was sought on the role of frontline staff in gas safety visits. It was confirmed this only related to forced access cases and within the context of staff having appropriate health and safety protocols to follow.

The Boards discussed how our Housing Officers are continuing to engage with tenants in a range of ways and that, as part of this, identify where wraparound services would be beneficial.

Decided: The Board noted the update.

5. Creating a new vehicle for Glasgow- progress update

The Board received feedback from the ballot of Cube tenants, with over 85% of tenants who voted being in favour of the transfer to GHA.

The Board welcomed the strong support from Cube tenants and recognised that this represented the first stage of the creation of a new vehicle for Glasgow.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted progress in developing the new vehicle for Glasgow, as the first step in delivering our vision for housing in the city, including the positive result of the Cube tenant ballot and findings from due diligence.**
- 2) agreed that the transfer is developed with a view to seeking final approval to it at the Board's next meeting.**

6. Your Home, Your Community, Your Future: Our 2021-26 strategy

The Board received a recap of the strategy sessions held by the Board in August/September last year and how our strategy has been refined to reflect this feedback.

The Board considered the revised strategy, recognising that it will evolve as our plans for a single platform for the City develop. It was agreed that changes reflected the areas we wished to accelerate or amend to take into account the pandemic.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted the feedback from the Board strategy workshops;**
- 2) agreed the updated GHA strategy: *Your Home, Your Community, Your Future*;**
- 3) noted the strategy will be refreshed to incorporate updated plans for the single platform for the City and brought back to the Board later in the year; and**
- 4) noted the proposed approach to staff engagement.**

7. Stronger Voices, Stronger Communities - our new engagement framework

The Board received a summary of the new engagement framework and our plans to refresh our approach to engagement.

The Board discussed the proposed approach and recognised that it would be an iterative process which the Board would continue to be engaged in.

Decided: The Board

**1) noted the new Group engagement framework at Appendix 1; and
2) agreed that the proposals for how the principles of the framework will be translated into realigned engagement practices for GHA will be brought back to the Board later this year.**

8. Operating model update: approach to service delivery

The proposed approach to how our service delivery will develop during the 2021-26 strategy period was set out to the Board in detail.

The Board considered how our plans for developing adaptive leadership, the level of adaptation this will mean for existing leaders and the leadership development we will provide.

It was restated that the evolution of our leadership approach has been our existing direction and that the changes to our operating model has acted as an accelerant to this.

Decided: The Board

**1) agreed the approach to service delivery set out in the report for the 2021-2026 strategy period; and
2) noted that this approach to service delivery will form part of our operating model along with more flexible working by staff and development of corporate hubs that the Board considered at its previous meetings.**

9. Five Year Development Programme

The Board received a summary of the proposed 5-year programme and a recap of the criteria we apply to all projects.

The Board supported the potential project in the Est End as an opportunity to significantly contribute to the wider Transformation Regeneration Area.

The Board sought an update on how our development approach supports energy efficiency and sustainability. It was explained that these areas are inherent in our approach, the standards for development were very high in terms of energy efficiency and we are looking increasingly at how we can minimise our carbon footprint.

It was also explained that national standards were also continuing to evolve with a focus on energy efficiency and sustainability.

The Board discussed the future and ongoing availability of grant funding. An update was provided on what is currently understood regarding the future Scottish Government allocation to supply. It was explained another factor will be how the grant reflects the additional compliance requirements for new social housing as well as enhanced specifications.

The Board sought an update on any impact to date on the supply chain or development activity. It was explained that there has been no material impact to date but that we are engaging closely with our contractors to keep this position under review.

The Board were advised that we have commissioned independent research and analysis on the impact and potential future impacts of Brexit and this will be brought back to the Board later in the year.

Decided: The Board approved the GHA five-year development programme as summarised in the report.

10. Rent and other charges 2021/22

The Board received feedback from our consultation on 2021/22 RSL rent and service charge increase.

The Board discussed the results of the consultation, in particular the proportion of tenants indicating support for one of the two options. The Board considered the results by area, where the support for one of the options was also a majority in all cases.

Taking into account the feedback, the Board agreed the rent and service charge uplift for 2021/22.

Decided: The Board

- 1) considered the feedback received through the consultation process with tenants on our 2021/22 RSL rent and service charge increase;**
- 2) agreed that a 1% rent increase be applied to the Cube tenants transferring to GHA;**
- 3) approved a 1% rent and service charge increase for the 3319 multi-storey properties identified in the consultation;**
- 4) approved a 1.7% rent and service charge increase 2021/22 for all other tenants; and**
- 5) agreed that we formally write to tenants to confirm this subject to Group Board approval.**

11. 2021/22 Financial Projections

The Board received a presentation setting out updated projections for investment in assets and services over the five-year period to 2026.

The Board discussed the current restrictions on repairs and the potential future implications for repairs costs and stock valuation. It was confirmed that we do not envisage any issues in relation to the stock valuation. It was further explained that we have still undertaken over 55,000 complaints in the year to date.

The Board discussed the budget for repairs for the year ahead and how we will profile the delivery of repairs, which will be contingent on the prevailing restrictions.

The Board sought clarification on the contingent efficiency grant. It was confirmed this related to the transfer agreement and is a single bullet maturity.

Decided: The Board

**1) approved the updated financial projections for the investment in assets and services over the five-year period to 2026; and
2) agreed that the projected 2021/22 figures form the basis of next year's annual budget which will be presented to the Board for the final approval in March.**

12. Group Homelessness Policy 2021-2026

The Board received an update on the current national policy direction in relation to homelessness and how the policy seeks to reflect these. It was reiterated that the policy and our approach has a clear focus on the need for balanced communities to ensure they are sustainable.

The Board discussed the proportion of lets being assumed for homelessness cases and reiterated the support element for such lets is a critical element to tenancy sustainment.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

13. Transforming our rent payment methods

The Board received a report setting out our plans to transform our approach to rent payment methods.

The Board discussed the focus on certain payment methods and sought clarification that there was no planned mandating of certain payment methods. It was confirmed that there would be no restriction and the focus would continue to be on discussion with tenants on what will best suit their circumstances.

The Board discussed the need for engagement with customers to be clear we are not making any recommendation which could be construed as advice.

Decided: The Board

**1) approved modernising our approach to rent payment methods as we fully harness the opportunities presented by technology for the benefit of both customers and our business, including the exploration and introduction of recurring card payments;
2) agreed a wider review of GHA's approach to rent and income collection, with a progress report to be provided in late 2021;
3) noted that our current WSS offering require to be reviewed in the longer term and in the context of delivering a customer App to facilitate easier access to services, deliver exceptional customer convenience and capture just in time feedback.**

14. Scottish Child Payment

The Board received the report about the Scottish Government's new Scottish Child Payment and were given an outline of GHA's approach to supporting customers' take up of this new benefit.

Decided: The Board noted our take up campaign for the new Scottish Child Payment, launching on 15 February 2021 and administered on behalf of the Scottish Government by Social Security Scotland.

15. Finance Report

The Board were provided with an overview of the financial performance for the nine-month period to 31 December 2020, including the latest forecast 2020/21. The Board were updated on the main costs expected to be incurred between now and the end of the financial year.

The Board considered financial performance for the year to date, recognising that the unprecedented circumstances have heavily impacted our performance relative to budget.

Decided: The Board noted the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2020 at Appendix 1 and the full year forecast outturn to 31 March 2021.

16. [redacted]

17. Delivery Plan 2020/21 and Quarter 3 performance

The Board received an update on performance for the year to date. It was explained that the increased restrictions in place have meant the targets have not changed to the next phase.

The Board considered the report and recognised the strong performance being delivered in challenging circumstances.

Decided: The Board noted performance for the year to date and the extension of the phase 2 targets reflecting the current operating context restrictions.

18. Governance update

The Board were updated on Board recruitment and succession planning and the revised Board reporting template.

The Board considered the template and suggested that it be widened in scope to cover environmental and sustainability issues. It was agreed this amendment be recommended to the Group Board.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted the retirement of Michael McNamara
- 2) agreed that the existing vacancy be held for potential tenant Board member from Cube;
- 3) noted that a further report will be brought to the May meeting on plans for future recruitment;
- 4) noted the revised Board reporting template and that it will take effect from April 2021; and
- 5) agreed to recommend to the Group Board the addition of an environmental and sustainability section to the Board reporting template.

19. Gender pay gap (presentation)

The Board were presented with the details of our gender pay gap report.

The Board sought clarification on how women on maternity leave are counted. It was confirmed they are excluded from the figure.

Decided: The Board noted the presentation.

20. AOCB

An update was sought on the alternative power contingency arrangements we have in place. It was confirmed that we have a range of measures, including emergency lighting in stairwells, access to generators, and also have staff support arrangements in place such as concierge.

Signed Date
(Chair)